Bulletin

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Royal Academy of Music

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC LIBRARY

Kommilitonen!
The Academy premieres a stunning new opera by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies and David Pountney

Latest news
Another exceptionally busy year for the Academy and our graduates

Neresheim Abbey
Celebrating twenty years of a remarkable collaboration

Welcome to the latest edition of the Bulletin, the Academy's news report for the past twelve months.

Only a fraction of the Academy's activities appear here — visit www.ram.ac.uk for the wider picture.

We're always interested to hear from you — if you'd like to get involved, contact us!

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Cover photograph:
Royal Academy Opera's premiere production of Kommilitonen!

Kommilitonen!

'One of the most exhilarating opera premieres I have attended… a coherent, powerful, poignant, poetic (and never preachy) stretch of music drama… Kommilitonen! makes no compromises but challenges young performers to new vocal and dramatic achievement… Inevitably, the evening was at times emotionally painful. It was also stirring, heroic, and, if the word does not seem too odd, entertaining.'
Andrew Porter, Opera magazine

'Orchestrally, vocally, theatrically, the performance is a triumph.'
Anna Picard, Independent on Sunday

'The London singers threw themselves into the fray with an energy and a dynamism that outclassed anything seen on the stage of a British conservatory in living memory.'
Michael White, New York Times

'I felt Kommilitonen! should be instantly committed to DVD, partly to show how appealing a new opera can be, partly as an advertisement for the superb establishment which mounted it.'
Michael Tanner, The Spectator

In March 2011, the premiere of Sir Peter Maxwell Davies's Kommilitonen! brought exceptional press and international recognition for Royal Academy Opera, the Academy's specialist postgraduate course.

Working with Blind Summit Theatre on puppetry, Royal Academy Opera and Royal Academy of Music Sinfonia collaborated with choreographer Carolyn Choa, director and librettist David Pountney and conductor Jane Glover to bring life to Sir Peter's new work, which was a joint commission between the Academy and the Juilliard School.

Kommilitonen! is made up of three stories whose scenes are interlinked, and occasionally — especially towards the end of the opera — run simultaneously. All three stories are about real events that happened to real people, with a unifying theme of students involved in political action.

The first story concerns James Meredith, a black man who in 1962 became the first of his race to be allowed to register for the University of Mississippi — 'Ole Miss' — then a bastion of Southern segregationist white supremacy. Meredith was a stubborn, obdurate and determined man whose dogged persistence eventually obliged the US Government to defend his registration with many thousands of troops, sparking a riot that caused death and massive injuries. He went through with the University course, guarded every day of his student life by US Marshals.

The second story concerns student resistance to Hitler's government during the Second World War. A brother and sister, Hans and Sophie Scholl, students at the University of Munich, gathered a small group called Die Weisse Rose (the white rose) who distributed thousands of leaflets throughout Germany protesting against the crimes being committed by the National Socialists, and prophesying the shame Germany would come to feel when these crimes were exposed. Their actions, for which they paid with their lives, effectively exposed the lie that ordinary Germans 'did not know' what was being done in their name. Kommilitonen means 'fellow students', and their final leaflet, addressed to their fellows, starts with the words 'Kommilitonen und Kommilitoninnen!'.

The third story is taken from an account of life during the Cultural Revolution in China, and is an example of student activism lurching lethally out of control. The children of a local education minister are forced to denounce their father, and eventually both their parents are dragged out of their house by Red Guards, beaten up, interrogated and murdered. Their son begins a long journey of coming to terms with these events, joins the Red Army and eventually the Communist Party, though he understands that this involves continuing to deny the truth about his parents' fate. Finally he becomes a professor, like his father, and writes a history of the Cultural Revolution, though he refuses to mention the people who he knows were responsible for his parents' deaths. This represents the particular and rather partial accommodation that China continues to make with its turbulent Maoist past.

We spoke with Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, director and librettist David Pountney, conductor Jane Glover, the Academy's Principal Jonathan Freeman-Attwood and members of the cast and orchestra to find out more…

Sir Peter Maxwell Davies
I had no plans to write any more operas or music-theatre works, but the invitation to compose a new work for the Royal Academy of Music in London and the Juilliard School in New York, to a libretto by David Pountney, with him as director, was too much to resist. David and I have collaborated before, so I knew that the stage direction would not be a travesty of text and music, and the idea of writing for and working with extremely talented young musicians was the final persuader.

There are three interwoven stories, demanding three different sorts of music, so I had to invent an American style of the late 1950s and early 60s, a German style for the 1940s, and a Chinese music of the period of the Cultural Revolution.

As the opera progresses, the contours of the musical phrases gradually transform, with all three styles coalescing in the final scene whose melodies were conceived first, and which are the source and origin of the whole work. Much thought went into judging the scale of difficulty of performance for the students — there could be no compositional compromise, but I had no intention of putting them off new music for ever by making unreasonable demands. It had to be challenging enough to remain interesting over a long period of rehearsal, but not awkward to the extent of being un-stimulating. One great feature of the libretto is its intensity, with touches of sly humour: for me this was a great stimulus which I just hope the music reflects.

I came to one of the first rehearsals many weeks and months before the *premiere and all* of the students including every member of the chorus had already committed all their parts to memory. The commitment displayed by the Academy students was just mind-boggling!

Jonathan Freeman-Attwood
The genesis of Kommilitonen! was the result of a memorable *volte face* conducted in the space of ten minutes. A lunch was held to celebrate the appointment of Max to the Academy staff in the Principal's office. My predecessor, Sir Curtis Price, always assumed the role of asking the seemingly impossible and then sent his deputy in to try and move it forward. Sometimes such decisions took days and weeks. Not this. On request, Max was unequivocal in declaring that his opera days were over. We discussed something else for five minutes and then, comet-like, arrived the gleeful exclamation: 'OK, I'll do it — but it must be about students and I want to do it with David Pountney... and we should do it somewhere else, as well as the Academy, and make it a joint commission.' (How could Max have thought about all this whilst we happily discussed a possible seminar on Byrd?)

So, the main ingredients of a wonderful opera were decided in a few minutes — from a spirited enquiry to the key cornerstones. I even recall Max telling us over the fruit that he wanted a significant baritone part! My thanks go to every contributor to this project but, above all, to Max, David and his wonderful team, Jane Glover and our students. It was also a real pleasure to work again with our close friends at Juilliard, with whom we've established such a strong collaborative bond.

David Pountney
The Zeitgeist has played some funny tricks on Kommilitonen!. When Max first talked to me about his commission from the Academy, I said that I thought we must write a piece not only for students but about students, and that perhaps student activism was the theme because... there wasn't any any more. That was then... and now? I eventually chose to weave together three stories drawn from wartime Germany, Maoist China and Civil Rights America, and the fact that they are all real stories makes Kommilitonen! another 'docu-opera', suddenly a fashionable genre in Anglo-Saxon countries.

Various people die miserable deaths in Kommilitonen!, but none of them for love: in fact this work commits the cardinal sin for an opera — even a 'Lyric Opera' as Max has called it — of having not a single shred of love interest, and no swear words either. It does, however, guard itself against the common accusation that many operas have no plot by having three. I have to admit it was great fun to write a libretto interlocking these three stories: I am not sure that there is any operatic precedent. It is as if Puccini had composed the Trittico as three simultaneous stories rather than three sequential ones, which would of course have been far more interesting! But this rather carefree complexity imposed an enormous challenge on the composer, which I think Max has met with astonishing virtuosity. It also places great challenges before the director, which is my own fault, but also before the Academy and the Juilliard School to realise such a complex dramaturgical plan with all its implications for cast, chorus, design and, not least, costume changes! It is an enormous tribute to the bravery of both institutions that they followed Max and me — a dangerous pair of Pied Pipers!

Jane Glover
Mounting any production with Royal Academy Opera is always a focus of intense energy, ardour and excitement. With Kommilitonen! we had the added frisson of presenting a world premiere by one of the world's greatest living composers. Peter Maxwell Davies and David Pountney created the most magnificent ensemble opera, which though written for young performers makes no concessions at all to youth. As we prepared and rehearsed Kommilitonen!, we relished the challenges and opportunities that it affords.

Max and David created a challenging work that gave no fewer than 89 singers and instrumentalists the chance to share in this huge event. Some singers play more than one character, and all of them are wonderfully drawn. The chorus has a monumental role, or rather roles, as it both participates in all three stories and also comments upon them — as it happens, in three different languages. Orchestrally too there are immense challenges, individual and communal, both in the pit and on stage.

I was so proud of all our students — singers and instrumentalists — who embraced this challenge with such energy. Some find contemporary music easier than others. I had some singers turn up for the first time with their part learned to perfection; others had a longer journey, with the help of the wonderful coaches that we have at the Academy.

But we were blessed not only by the honour of mounting this premiere, but by the presence of both its creators. Having Peter Maxwell Davies and David Pountney here in the Academy, each of them tweaking, adjusting, refining, was completely exhilarating: it was almost as if Mozart and Da Ponte were with us. We are immeasurably grateful to them both for an experience none of us will ever forget.

Marcus Farnsworth, baritone
My character in Kommilitonen! was James Meredith, who was a real challenge for me. I was very worried about how I could convincingly play a black man, particularly as this is a big role and carries quite a lot of the weight of the story. As soon as it came to rehearsals with David Pountney, we all stopped worrying about it, as David was so clear about how he wanted things to work on stage. He also dealt with all the roles very symbolically and it did not matter at all that we didn't have Asian students to play the characters within the Cultural Revolution thread.

Ruth Jenkins, soprano
I played the character of Zhou, who is an eleven-year-old Chinese boy, leading the Red Army in the Chinese Cultural Revolution, who is very violent and was involved in the murder of one of the main character's parents. But by the end Zhou realises the atrocities that he has committed and regrets them. The final scene, which takes place after the end of the Cultural Revolution, is hauntingly disturbing in how it portrays the way the Chinese just brushed over this whole terrible episode in their past.

Aoife Miskelly, soprano
I was extremely pleased to have been given the role of Sophie Scholl, one of the students in Die Weisse Rose. Sophie's big aria is a singer's dream. It comes straight after another episode, which requires a change of costume and there is very little time to steady yourself and catch your breath for this huge aria, which is an amazing experience.

Carly Lake, French horn
Max came to every rehearsal and it was amazing to have his advice on what kind of sound he was looking for. We had to experiment with a couple of different kinds of mutes to find the timbre that he envisaged for the music. It was great to be able to understand the music that we were playing and good fun too — at one point in the opera I had to imitate an elephant crashing in with huge glissandi over the entire orchestra playing a beautiful melody! It was a truly special experience to play a part for the first time, when you can't just go to a shop and buy a recording.

Kate Suthers, principal second violin
At the first full orchestral rehearsal it was amazing how these three different stories and the music that illustrates them came together. When we started rehearsing with the singers it just got better and better. I've never done a world premiere that was so high profile before and it was so exciting to be part of it — the energy that was in the cast, in the pit, or coming from Jane Glover, was just electric! The audience were amazing too. They interacted with the opera so well and the way they stood up at the end was just exhilarating.

The New York connection

Kommilitonen! has also become the latest instalment in the Academy's portfolio of collaborative projects with the Juilliard School. After attending the American premiere in November, the Principal wrote in his blog on the Academy's website:

'Over the years, there's been no happier or more fruitful international relationship than with the great Juilliard School in New York, with whom we have a wonderful history of shared projects. These include a composers CD, joint chamber concerts at Wigmore Hall and the Lincoln Center, a live televised Prom of our joint orchestra in 2005 under Sir Colin Davis, as well as many professorial and student exchanges. There are other exciting plans in the pipeline in which mutual friendship and artistic understanding form a proud alliance between two household names in musical education. I am deeply grateful for the vision and support of their President, Joseph Polisi, the Director of Opera, Brian Zeger, and all the staff at Juilliard.'

Review round-up

Here are just some of the reviews:

'The Royal Academy of Music students under Jane Glover are remarkable… The chorus works tirelessly… Marcus Farnsworth as Meredith, Aoife Miskelly as the student Sophie Scholl and John-Owen Miley-Read as the Gestapo's Grand Inquisitor all demand special mention.'
The Guardian (5 stars)

'A bold and beautiful assertion of the transformative power of truth.'
Evening Standard (5 stars)

'A triumph… The narrative was clear, the structure strong, with several budget-conscious but impressively dramatic coups. And the result outclassed anything I've seen on a college stage in years, inspiring wonderful performances all round.'
Daily Telegraph (blog)

'Imaginative… inspired… The music works with exemplary theatrical skill… The singing was consistently good… and the Royal Academy of Music Sinfonia under conductor Jane Glover gave its best in Maxwell Davies's imaginative orchestral writing.'
Financial Times (4 stars)

'Paul Driver is astounded by Peter Maxwell Davies' brilliant opera about protest movements.'
Sunday Times

'A gripping new opera about — for once — something important.'
Sunday Telegraph (4 stars)

'...this bold adventure has paid off.'
The Observer

'A punchy piece of theatre… Visually, this is a fine realisation, purposefully conducted by Jane Glover.'
The Stage

'Pountney's staging and Robert Innes Hopkins's designs match the libretto in ingenuity.'
The Times (4 stars)

'Admirably effective and inventive… Jane Glover conducts an enthusiastic orchestra with aplomb.'
Daily Telegraph

'The way the opera cuts continually from one group of characters to another lends the work cinematic vibrancy… This production… is a triumph of simplicity and fluid stage maneuvers.'
New York Times

'With timid tonality pervading so many new operas, it was refreshing to hear the edgy, acerbic sounds of… this lively display of youthful ferment.'
Wall Street Journal

News

'This building has been absolutely at the centre of everything that I have learnt.'
Sir Simon Rattle, March 2011

Appointments

The Academy continues to strengthen its principal-study teaching staff and roster of Visiting Professors. Our unstinting aim is to ensure that Academy students get the widest range of mentoring from musicians who are recognised to be at the very top of their profession.

As was heralded in our previous Bulletin, the outstanding artist and educator **Joanna MacGregor** became Head of Piano Studies in September. Her appointments so far include **Imogen Cooper** as Visiting Professor of Interpretation of Piano and Song; and Academy alumni **Yevgeny Sudbin** and **James Baillieu**, who have both made a significant impact on the profession in a few short years after graduating. **Professor Christopher Elton**, Head of Keyboard from 1986 to 2011, remains on the staff as Professor Emeritus of Keyboard.

In 2011, **Semyon Bychkov** was appointed to the new position of Otto Klemperer Chair of Conducting. We look forward to his next visit, to conduct the Academy Concert Orchestra in May.

We recently announced the appointment of the legendary **Dave Douglas** as International Jazz Artist in Residence. This exceptionally prolific and original trumpeter-composer will spend a week in residence at the Academy in January 2012. His visit will culminate in a rare public masterclass, and a concert featuring Academy Big Band as well as music for smaller ensemble.

We were delighted to appoint **Mark David** to the role of Head of Brass from September 2011. Mark, one of the most outstanding trumpet players and teachers of his generation, succeeded Professor James Watson, whose sudden death in February so shocked us all at the Academy. **Bob Hughes** plays an important supplementary role as Senior Tutor of Brass and assists Mark in delivering the very best training for Academy students, alongside our exceptional roster of professors.

Starting in September 2012, **Ian Bousfield** will be relaunching his trombone class that he taught so successfully at the Royal Academy of Music until he left the LSO for the Vienna Philharmonic in 2000. He will be at the Academy every three weeks for intensive coaching and lessons. In the interim weeks, **Matthew Gee**, Principal Trombone in the Royal Philharmonic, will continue Ian's teaching. Another visitor to the Academy three times a year will be **Jörgen van Rijen**, Principal Trombone of the Concertgebouw Orchestra, making the Academy one of the strongest trombone departments anywhere. Also in brass, the legendary **Elgar Howarth** has joined as Director of Brass Ensembles, and **Paul Beniston** as professor of trumpet.

In September **Angela Doane** was welcomed to the Academy in the new post of Head of Collections. Angela developed a world-wide reputation in her previous role as Head of Collections at the National Maritime Museum, and joins us at a very exciting time for the Academy's Museum and Collections.

We are delighted to welcome **Anthony Gritten** as Head of Undergraduate Studies. Anthony brings a wealth of experience to this crucial position. His predecessor in the role, **Timothy Bowers**, has been appointed as Alan Bush Lecturer.

Head of Strings Jo Cole has made some significant appointments to our exceptional roster of strings professors, representing the Academy's continuing desire to appoint the very best of today's active, thriving artists to teach the next generation of talented performers. Internationally renowned performer **Daniel Hope** is now Visiting Professor in Violin, and will give masterclasses and career workshops at the Academy whenever his performing engagements permit. **Matthew McDonald**, Principal Bass of the Berlin Philharmonic, has been appointed as Visiting Professor of Double Bass. From the very latest generation of top international soloists and chamber musicians, the Academy welcomes **Guy Johnston** as professor of cello and Academy alumnus **Jack Liebeck** as professor of violin. Badke Quartet violist **Jon Thorne** has joined as professor of viola and will take additional responsibility for chamber music. Newly appointed violin professor **Maureen Smith** brings a wealth of experience in teaching and also as a seasoned performer. Academy alumna **Su Zhen** has been appointed Visiting Professor of Viola in addition to her role as our representative in China. In September, **Sung-Won Yang**, professor of cello at Yonsei University in Seoul, started one year as Professor in Residence, Cello and Chamber Music.

The Woodwind department recently appointed three new flute teachers: **Sam Coles** and **Paul Edmund-Davies** as professors of flute and **Emily Beynon** as Visiting Professor of Flute.

Events

Our schedule of performances, masterclasses, research presentations, family days, museum events and other activities in 2011 was arguably our busiest and most diverse ever. It's an impossible task to list all of the significant events, but here are just some of the many highlights.

Visiting guest artists in 2011 included Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Iain Ballamy, Martyn Brabbins, Sir Colin Davis, Sir Mark Elder, Peter Erskine, Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreen, Heinz Holliger, Susanna Mälkki, Trevor Pinnock, Sir Simon Rattle, Peter Schreier, James Taylor, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Christian Thielemann, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Stan Tracey, Dame Mitsuko Uchida and Jacques Zoon.

Masterclasses with world-famous artists featured Milda Agazarian, Sir Thomas Allen, Bernard d'Ascoli, Eric Aubier, Barbara Bonney, Ian Bousfield, Susan Bullock, Thomas Brandis, Paul Brough, Pascal Devoyon, Julius Drake, Catrin Finch, Reinhold Friedrich, Andreas Haefliger, Rolf Hind, Stephen Hough, Graham Johnson, Jonathan Kelly, Angelika Kirchschlager, Ralph Kirshbaum, Garth Knox, Tasmin Little, Dame Felicity Lott, Andrew Marriner, Patrick Messina, Truls Mørk, Ann Murray, John O'Conor, Emmanuel Pahud, Rachel Podger, Ferenc Rados, Michael Roll, Dominic Seldis, Brindley Sherratt, Gareth Small, Raphael Wallfisch, Dame Fanny Waterman and many more.

Following **Royal Academy Opera**'s premiere of Sir Peter Maxwell Davies's Kommilitonen! in March (see page 2), the Academy's specialist postgraduate course performed Kurt Weill's Die Dreigroschenoper (The Threepenny Opera) in May 2011. Conducted by Dominic Wheeler and directed by John Ramster,

1 Masterclass with Andreas Haefliger
2 Musical Theatre production of Follies
3 Mark David, Head of Brass
4 Sir Simon Rattle with the Principal

Brecht and Weill's 20th-century masterpiece turned out to be as relevant to the 21st-century Crunch as it was to the 1928 Crash. Opera magazine wrote: 'I've rarely heard this music sound so good… they should take this to the West End.' In November, Royal Academy Opera welcomed back Sir Colin Davis to renew his exceptionally fruitful partnership with director John Copley. The production of Berlioz's Béatrice et Bénédict was sung in French and the interlinking dialogue was, except for some topical adjustments, in Shakespeare's original lines. The Times wrote: 'It is delectably performed by the Royal Academy of Music. No surprise there... in a piece teeming with delightful ensembles there is good singing all over the stage. Beg for a return; it's sold out.'

On Friday 28th January the Academy presented a special fundraising concert at the Royal Opera House. The legendary creative partnership of **Sir Elton John and Ray Cooper** performed to an enthusiastic sell-out audience, seamlessly switching between well-loved hits from Elton's back catalogue and some less familiar repertoire. Legions of devoted Elton fans were joined by celebrities, all helping to raise funds for a new organ in the Academy's Duke's Hall.

On Friday 4th March Academy alumnus **Sir Simon Rattle**, Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Berlin Philharmonic, received an Honorary Doctorate of the University of London. The ceremony, held in the Duke's Hall, included a performance of the first movement of Bruckner's Ninth Symphony by the Academy Concert Orchestra, with Sir Simon conducting. Sir Simon joins a small number of musicians to be awarded Honorary Doctorates since the Academy became a full constituent college of the University in 1999. Previous recipients include Sir Colin Davis, Sir Elton John, Pierre Boulez, Daniel Barenboim and Stephen Sondheim. Sir Simon talked about his time at the Academy and told the audience, 'This building has been absolutely at the centre of everything that I have learnt.'

On Friday 14th October **Christian Thielemann** received Honorary Membership of the Academy. As part of the ceremony he conducted the Academy Concert Orchestra in Strauss's Don Juan and spoke of the importance of having variety within tradition, as well as about the wordless power of music. He commented: 'It is such an honour to experience the wonderful atmosphere of this place. The playing is so open and flexible. When you hear them playing, you are not frightened or unhappy for the future... they make me feel really happy about what the future will bring.'

On Saturday 18th June the Academy held a very special concert to celebrate the life of **Professor James Watson**, Head of Brass 2001–2011. This was an occasion which we hope followed Jim's inspirational example by celebrating his full life, in style. The tribute featured a star-studded line-up of trumpeters and Academy Brass conducted by Bob Hughes. It was compered by Victoria Wood.

Among other notable events were nine further performances in our extraordinary **Bach Cantata** series, presented with the generous support of the Kohn Foundation: seven directed by our resident Kapellmeister Iain Ledingham, the others with guest conductors Peter Schreier and John Butt. You can hear part of the concert with Peter Schreier on the Academy's rapidly expanding website, at www.ram.ac.uk/music. In January, we begin the fourth year of our epic journey through all of Bach's sacred and secular choral music.

Our popular **'Free on Fridays'** lunchtime concert series continued to attract large and enthusiastic audiences throughout the year. Our timpani and percussion students annual performance in this series celebrated the 75th birthday of **Steve Reich**, preceding a recording due for release in 2012. We also introduced a new **Tuesday lunchtime series**, which features our top soloists and smaller ensembles. **Musical theatre** students had a busy year, culminating in productions of Stephen Sondheim's Follies and Pete Townshend's Tommy.

During 2011 **Academy Big Band** presented memorable concerts featuring legendary figures including Keith Nichols, James Taylor and Stan Tracey CBE, the 'Godfather of British Jazz'.

In November we celebrated the 190th year of the Academy, and a century in Marylebone. See page 8 for details, including extracts of Richard Morrison's enthusiastic review in The Times.

Away from Marylebone, Academy students performed at Kings Place, Spitalfields Music, Southwark Cathedral, Norfolk & Norwich Festival, Bristol's Colston Hall and University of London's Senate House. The Academy's elite vocal and string ensembles, Song Circle and the Sainsbury Royal Academy Soloists, both gave concerts at Wigmore Hall. In October the Academy Manson Ensemble joined forces with the City of London Sinfonia and Academy professor Tasmin Little at the Queen Elizabeth Hall to pay tribute to the distinguished composer and Academy alumnus Nicholas Maw, who died in 2009.

The **Royal Academy of Music Bach Prize**, sponsored by the Kohn Foundation, is awarded annually to celebrate an outstanding contribution to the performance and/or scholarly study of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. This year's prize has been awarded to the Thomanerchor Leipzig, the boys' choir which in 2012 will celebrate its 800th anniversary. The Bach Prize will be presented to the Thomanerchor at a special concert on Sunday 11th March in the Academy's Duke's Hall, as part of the Royal Academy of Music/Kohn Foundation Bach Cantata Series. Previous winners Professor Christoph Wolff, Sir John Eliot Gardiner and András Schiff were on the selection panel which awarded this year's prize, along with Professor Jonathan Freeman-Attwood (Principal of the Royal Academy of Music) and Sir Ralph Kohn (Kohn Foundation). Incidentally, we were delighted to hear in June that Sir Ralph had been awarded the Medal of Honour of his home town, the City of Leipzig. This prestigious award is made to 'those who have in an exceptional manner contributed to the City's cultural, economic, political, social development or welfare'.

Recordings

You can now hear Academy recordings online at www.ram.ac.uk/music, as well as at Last.fm, Spotify and Naxos Music Library, amongst others — and you can purchase selected recordings at iTunes, Amazon and eMusic. Discs are also sold at the Academy Chimes shop, with all proceeds used to fund future recordings. Recordings in production feature music by Frank Zappa and Steve Reich.

Top of the league

The Academy has again achieved consistently high rankings in education league tables, including — for the third year in succession — being rated Britain's top conservatoire in The Guardian's University Guide. The Academy scored 95.5 in the 2011 table, a rating which was exceeded only by Bristol and Oxford Universities. The Guardian also praised the Academy's 'truly impressive facilities'.

A new organ

With the generous support of Sir Elton John, the Academy has commissioned a new organ for the Duke's Hall from the internationally acclaimed Swiss firm Orgelbau Kuhn of Männedorf. This three-manual, 42-stop instrument will have 2,921 pipes, varying from well over 16 feet to just 4mm long. Weighing in at 14 tons, it will be made from the finest materials including fir, pine, oak, beech and ebony wood as well as tin, lead, brass, aluminium and gold leaf.

In August, the previous Duke's Hall organ was removed by its original manufacturers. Installation of the new organ will take place in 2013.

Honorary awards

Our graduation ceremony in July 2011 was a truly special occasion. After an address by the Academy's Principal, students were presented with their degree certificates by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Visiting Professor of Composition.

John Suchet spoke eloquently about distinguished guests Valerie Botwright, Andrew Foster-Williams, Henry Lowther and Llŷr Williams, who received Fellowships of the Academy, while Raffy Manoukian, Lady Ritblat and Janet Snowman received Honorary Fellowships. Simon Keenlyside, Neil Mackie and Karita Mattila were presented with Honorary Membership of the Academy, and recording legend Sir George Martin received an Honorary Doctorate of the University of London.

Bulletinterview
Benjamin Grosvenor

How did you start playing the piano?
My mother started teaching me at the age of six. My four older brothers began learning instruments at around that age, and I chose the piano as it was the most familiar to me, given that my mother taught it herself. I think I realised that I really wanted to be a pianist at the time when I gave my first performances at around the age of nine or ten. The act of performance — the act of communicating with an audience — allowed for a meaningful realisation of everything I did in the practice room.

Following your outstanding win in the Keyboard Final of the BBC Young Musician in 2004, you could have entered any music college in the world. Why did you choose to study at the Academy?
I actually had connections with the Academy before I reached the final of this competition. At the age of nine I began having lessons with Hilary Coates, and when I passed the first rounds of the BBC competition, her husband, Christopher Elton, started teaching me. By 14 I was also having weekly lessons at the Academy in other aspects of music such as contextual studies and in matters of performance practice with Daniel-Ben Pienaar. It seemed natural to continue my studies at the Academy, and so at 16 I enrolled on the BMus programme. Since then I have very much enjoyed studying a range of subjects with so many wonderful teachers and of course I also appreciate sharing the social aspect of my time at the Academy with my fellow young musicians.

You have had the most amazing year, with so many wonderful opportunities to perform with leading conductors and orchestras. Which concert appearances were particularly memorable for you in 2011?
I think performing at the First Night of the Proms was the highlight of this year, and of my career to date. There is such a great atmosphere at the Proms, for the first night especially, and I was lucky in that I was chosen to perform a piece (Liszt's Second Concerto) that I had wanted to play for a while. I was very pleased to have the opportunity to appear again in the festival a few weeks later with the National Youth Orchestra.

How do you manage to combine your studies at the Academy with your busy international concert schedule?
Everyone at the Academy has been very supportive, and I have been allowed a lot of flexibility, which was particularly useful for me last spring/summer when I found myself very busy with recording commitments, recitals and then the Proms. My academic tutors were very helpful and understanding. Fortunately regular correspondence with my tutors — and, I suppose, my own sense of responsibility — prevented me from getting behind.

Do you receive support from the Academy when it comes to building up skills for managing your career successfully in the long term?
The Academy has ensured that support is there if I need it, but I am lucky in that I have a manager whom I trust and who has worked with me for a while. I am also grateful for the support of my family and my Academy professors, of course.

Nine Academy students have been selected for the LSO String Experience 2011–12: violinists **Marciana Buta, Konrad Elias-Trostmann, Katie Littlemore** and **Charlotte Skinner;** violists **Steve Doman** and **Glen Donnelly**; cellists **Marie Girbal** and **Hetty Snell**; and double bassist **William Cole.** They will play in rehearsals and concerts with the LSO, and together make up nearly half the 20 players who were selected from all of the London conservatoires.

Seven of those nominated for this year's British Composer Awards are connected to the Academy: **Martin Suckling** (2010) was nominated in both the Chamber and Vocal categories; **Alexander Campkin** (2009) in the Choral category; Senior Professor of Composition **Simon Bainbridge** was nominated in the Orchestral category. Two out of three nominees in the Community or Educational Project category are linked with the Academy — the late **David**

Current professor **Christopher Austin** conducted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in Polish contemporary music at Cadogan Hall with cellist **Jakob Kullberg** (2005) and violinist **Giovanni Guzzo** (2009) as soloists.

Current student **Kristine Balanas** won fourth prize and the prize for the best interpretation of a 20th-century concerto in the 30th International Violin Competition 'Premio Rodolfo Lipizer'.

In 2011, the **Barbirolli Quartet** (Leverhulme Chamber Music Fellows 2010–11) performed at the Verbier, Aldeburgh, Aix-en-Provence, Mananan International and Septembre Musical Montreux Festivals. They made their debut at Kings Place for the London Chamber Music Society, and were selected for the final of the 6th Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition along with the **Piatti Quartet,** current Leverhulme Chamber Music Fellows.

BBC Performing Arts Fund and various University of Oxford colleges.

Daniel Cohen (2010) has received a commission to create a new score for Alfred Hitchcock's silent film The Pleasure Garden (1925), which will be performed by the Academy Manson Ensemble at the British Film Institute (BFI) as part of the London 2012 Festival next summer.

Second-year undergraduate composer **Lloyd Coleman** is writing a piece for the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and is having a documentary made about him by BBC TV.

Christopher Cooper (2002) was appointed as the Principal Bassoon of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

Jessica Cottis (2009) recently directed five performances of Weill's Seven Deadly Sins for Scottish Opera in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Current undergraduate violinist **Konrad Elias-Trostmann** won the 2011–12 Enescu Scholarship, granted by the Romanian Cultural Institute.

Anthony Flaum (musical theatre, 2006) and pianist **Stephen Hose** (1974) appeared in Troy Boy, a new production of Offenbach's La belle Hélène by the Merry Opera Company.

Double bass graduate **Michael Francis** (2003) plays in the London Symphony Orchestra and has been appointed Chief Conductor and Artistic Advisor of Sweden's Norrköping Symphony Orchestra. He has recently conducted the New York Philharmonic and worked with the Münchner Symphoniker, the Orchestra of the Komische Oper Berlin and the Netherlands Philharmonic.

Academy people

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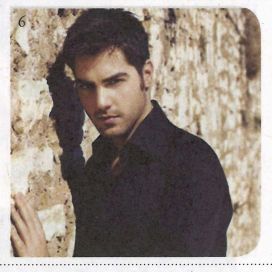

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Bedford (1961) and former member of Open Academy staff **John Barber.** Current PhD student **Richard Bullen** won the Making Music Award, while Visiting Professor of Composition **Bent Sørensen** won the International Award category.

Four out of five finalists of the 2011 Hampshire Singing Competition were from the Academy. They were **Frederick Long** and **Ross Ramgobin** as well as the joint winners, **Aoife Miskelly** and **Andrew Dickinson** (graduated 2011). In addition, postgraduate **Jennifer France** won the Song Award and **Chris Hopkins** (2010) won the Accompanist Award.

Three groups with Academy links have been selected for the Early Music Live! scheme: La Terra e il Mare, comprised of postgraduate students **Katie Bray**, **Leo Duarte**, **Naomi Burrell**, **Jonathan Rees** together with **Tom Foster** (2004); Spiritato, including baroque violinist **Alexis Brett** (2009) and baroque viola player **Joanne Miller** (2008); and Evolution Wind Quintet, including **Leo Duarte** and baroque flautist **Eva Caballero** (2008).

Saxophonist **Josh Arcoleo** (2011) is the first winner of the Academy's Kenny Wheeler Jazz Prize, winning a recording contract with Edition Records. He performed in the 2011 London Jazz Festival with Jeff Williams's group and Stan Sulzmann's Big Band.

Kit Armstrong (2008) was a winner in the ASCAP Foundation's Morton Gould Young Composer Award 2011.

Violinist and conductor **Maria Arnaout** (2002) has been appointed General Director of the Damascus Opera House. She is also the founder and Artistic Director of the Syrian National Youth Orchestra and Concert Master of the Syrian National Symphony Orchestra.

Sir Harrison Birtwistle's (1958) Night's Black Bird, recorded by the Hallé Orchestra, won the Contemporary category of the Gramophone Awards 2011.

A composition by current Manson Fellow **Samuel Bordoli** was premiered and performed 18 times by an ensemble located in the alcoves inside the Monument in the City of London. The ensemble featured current undergraduates soprano **Carrie Thompson**, clarinettist **Oliver Janes** and violist **Kimberley Harrenstein.** Samuel also appeared on BBC Radio 3's Music Matters, with current PhD student **Laura Bowler** and Masters student **Paul Burke**, to discuss their methods of notation.

Laura Bowler (2011) and Masters student **Hollie Harding** have been selected to write pieces for the LPO for their Debut Sounds scheme. The new works will be broadcast on Radio 3 and played in the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Second-year postgraduate choral conductor **Hilary Campbell** and the vocal ensemble Blossom Street, which she directs, have just released Sleep, Holy Babe on Naxos. The album was featured on BBC Radio 3's In Tune and The Choir and was David Mellor's Christmas CD of the Year on Classic FM.

Masters student **Antony Camillo** won the Accompanist's Prize at the Kathleen Ferrier Society Bursary for Young Singers. Soprano **Harriet Eyley** won second prize, and baritone **Richard Walshe** also reached the final.

Alexander Campkin (2009) has recently composed choral and orchestral settings of the Bible for Birmingham Cathedral. Alexander also won the Special Prize of the Archbishop of Rouen 2011 and received commissions from Serikon, Esterhazy Singers, Galan Ensemble,

Pianist **Christine Croshaw** (1965) released a CD of piano music by Saint-Saëns on Meridian Records. Christine regularly performs in major festivals at home and abroad and is due to record a Fauré disc in 2012.

Second-year Masters student **Qiaojing Dai** won first prize and the audience prize in the Dudley International Piano Competition. She won the Yamaha Music Foundation of Europe Awards, during which she was also selected to perform Mozart's Piano Concerto no.15.

The **Daimon Quartet** (**Kristine Balanas** and **Marta Pawlowska** violins, **Mihai Cocea** viola and **Antonio Novais** cello) won the Cavatina Intercollegiate Quartet Competition 2011 at the Greenwich International String Quartet Festival.

Composer **Philip Dawson** (1997) won the Royal Philharmonic Society Prize, which includes a commission to write a piece for the London Sinfonietta.

As part of their bicentenary in September, Chappell of Bond Street presented pianist **Kit Downes** (2009), percussionist **James Maddren** (2009), double bassist **Calum Gourlay** (2008), saxophonist **James Allsopp** (2003) and cellist **Lucy Railton** (2008) in a charity concert for Centrepoint. The quintet also appeared at Pizza Express Dean Street in the London Jazz Festival in November.

Tenor **Olivier Dumait** (2000) made a debut at La Scala under Esa-Pekka Salonen and appeared in further productions at La Monnaie, Brussels, and the Opéras in Bordeaux and Strasbourg. He also appeared at the Berliner Staatsoper as the Young Prisoner in From the House of the Dead, conducted by Sir Simon Rattle.

The Principal **Jonathan Freeman-Attwood**'s recording production in 2011 included a disc of Mozart with Rachel Podger and Jane Rogers (which won a Diapason d'Or), Robert Parsons with Cardinall's Musick for Hyperion, and the complete Mozart Piano Sonatas with Academy professor and alumnus **Daniel-Ben Pienaar** (which came fifth in the Sunday Times top recordings of 2011).

Violinist **Thomas Gould** (2006) released a recording of Nico Muhly's Concerto for electric violin with Aurora Orchestra on Decca Classics. Last year he went on a nine-concert tour of Australia as soloist and director with the Australian Chamber Orchestra's ACO2 and directed Britten Sinfonia in acclaimed performances of Bach's Goldberg Variations (in Dmitry Sitkovetsky's arrangement).

Student soprano **Sónia Grané** and pianist **Edwige Herchenroder** (current Hodgson Fellow) won the Oxford Lieder Young Artists Platform.

Undergraduate pianist **Benjamin Grosvenor** was invited to appear as a soloist twice in the BBC Proms 2011. He performed Liszt's Second Concerto at the First Night of the Proms with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and played Britten's Concerto with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain a few weeks later. Benjamin has also won a three-year recording contract with Decca: his first disc was released in the summer.

Giovanni Guzzo (2009) led the Budapest Festival Orchestra under Thierry Fischer.

Choral conductor **Greg Hallam** (2010) has been appointed Conductor of the Swansea Bach Choir.

Undergraduate pianist **Julia Hamos** has won the first Jacob Barnes Scholarship, established in memory of **Jacob Barnes** (1989–2011), who despite being diagnosed with leukaemia at the end of his first year at the Academy, continued to develop his generous and deeply insightful musical style and rejoiced in collaborative music-making up until his death in April.

Pianist **Chris Hopkins** (2011) has been working at Welsh National Opera as a member of the music staff following the completion of his Shinn Fellowship at the Academy.

Royal Academy Opera student tenor **Stuart Jackson** won second prize in the Wigmore Hall/Kohn Foundation International Song Competition. He was accompanied by **Jocelyn Freeman** (2011). Baritone **Jonathan McGovern** (2011) and pianist **Timothy End** (2009) won the Duo Prize, while Timothy was also a joint winner of the Accompanist Prize.

Current student **Nathaniel Mander** won the Fenton House Broadwood Solo Harpsichord Competition.

Pianist **Andrew Matthews-Owen**'s (2004) debut CD of song cycles by **Alun Hoddinott**, with soprano Claire Booth and tenor Nicky Spence, was a Recommended Recording of the Month in Gramophone magazine. Andrew recently performed at the Southbank Centre.

Jonathan McGovern (2011) and Royal Academy Opera student **Marcus Farnsworth** took second prize and the song prize respectively at the 2011 Kathleen Ferrier Awards, while pianist **Timothy End** (2009) was awarded the MBF Accompanist's Prize. Jonathan recently appeared in a new production of Albert Herring with Britten-Pears Young Artists and made his ENO debut as Jake in Nico Muhly's Two Boys.

Jazz piano trio Phronesis, founded by double bassist **Jasper Hoiby** (2005) and pianist **Ivo Neame** (2003), have recently released their third album on Edition Records. It was named Jazz Album of the Year by Jazzwise magazine.

The **Piatti Quartet** (Leverhulme Chamber Music Fellows) made their Wigmore Hall debut in February 2011 and are looking forward to returning there in April 2012. They won the St Peter's Eaton Square Prize 2011.

Charlie Piper (2011) has written new commissions for the London Sinfonietta and Britten Sinfonia and had performances in Italy, France and New York City.

Deputy Principal **Mark Racz** received his Fellowship of Birmingham Conservatoire at a graduation ceremony held in Symphony Hall.

David Stevens (2009) has been appointed Master of the Choristers at St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast.

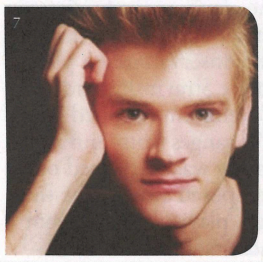
Luke Styles (2005) has been appointed Young Composer in Residence at Glyndebourne.

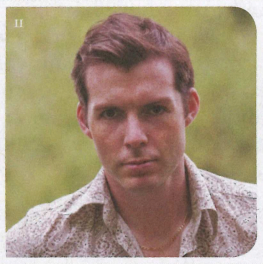
Luka Sulic (2011) performed a recital at Wigmore Hall last May, as the prize for winning the Academy's Patrons' Award. Luka was supported by an Elton John Scholarship and toured with Sir Elton this year. His YouTube video, on which he performs Michael Jackson's Smooth Criminal with fellow cellist Stjepan Hauser, has been viewed more than five million times.

Stuart Thompson (1993), Director of Music at Caterham School in Surrey, won the Times Carol Competition 2011.

For generations, Academy musicians have been shaping the profession. We'd welcome your news for the next Bulletin; please send it to the address on page 2.

1 Samuel Bordoli at the Monument
2 Laura Bowler
3 Thomas Gould
4 Giovanni Guzzo
5 Ji Liu
6 Miloš Karadaglić
7 Nathaniel Mander
8 Ludovic Morlot
9 Aisha Orazbayeva
10 Meeta Raval
11 Gwilym Simcock
12 Luka Sulic





Current undergraduate pianist **Ji Liu** won the 2011 R.A.M. Club Prize. Current undergraduate violinist **Kristine Balanas** was highly commended, and pianist **Ellena Hale** (2011) was awarded the Vivian Langrish Memorial Trust Prize for the best accompanist.

French horn player **Terry Johns** (1965) has recently published his book, Letters from Lines and Spaces.

Timothy Jones, Deputy Principal (Programmes and Research), is continuing his major series of Mozart editions.

The **Jubilee Quartet** (current students **Tereza Privratska** and **Alanna Tonetti Tieppo** violins, **Stephanie Edmundson** viola and **Lauren Steel** cello) won the Val Tidone International Chamber Music Competition.

Guitarist **Miloš Karadaglić** (2006) recently released a debut album on Deutsche Grammophon, featuring music by Mediterranean composers, with the English Chamber Orchestra under Paul Watkins. This chart-topping disc won the Specialist Classical Chart and Young Artist of the Year awards at the Gramophone Awards 2011.

Student trombonist **Matthew Lewis** won first prize — the John Lill Awards Trophy — in the final of the Essex Young Musician of the Year. It was his third consecutive appearance in the final, and his first victory.

Cello professor **Mats Lidström** recently published The Swan, his latest piece for cello and piano, as well as some new transcriptions of Bach's music for cello in his series entitled 'if Bach was a cellist'.

Current undergraduate pianist **Florian Mitrea** won first prize at the 2011 Sheepdrove Piano Competition. The competition is open to nominees from each of the UK conservatoires. Another current student, **Evelyne Berezovsky**, won second prize.

Jazz guitarist **Chris Montague** (2007) has been touring Europe with his own band Troyka, as well as with Colin Towns's new project.

Ludovic Morlot (2000) is to become chief conductor of Belgium's national opera house, La Monnaie/De Munt, and Music Director designate of the Seattle Symphony.

Andrew Morris (1970) has moved to Cambridge to develop his freelance conducting and continuo career after teaching at Bedford School for 32 years as Director of Music. He has examined for the ABRSM for 31 years.

Geraldine Mucha (1943, née Thomson) has lived in central Prague since 1947 and is still active and composing. The daughter-in-law of the art nouveau painter Alphonse Mucha, she is guardian of many Mucha artefacts.

Head of Accordion **Owen Murray** was awarded the prestigious Silver Disk for special accomplishments in the field of accordion culture at the closing ceremony of the International Competition of Bayanists and Accordionists in Moscow. He is the only UK accordionist to be awarded this honour.

Violinist **Aisha Orazbayeva** (2011) recently released her debut album Outside, featuring works by Sciarrino, Lachenmann, Ravel and Peter Zinovieff.

Francesco Pasqualetti (2010) conducted Verdi's Nabucco in a tour of northern Italy to mark the 150th anniversary of Italian unification.

Soprano **Meeta Raval** (2009) recently appeared as First Flower Maiden in Parsifal for English National Opera and as Cio-Cio-San in Madam Butterfly for Mid Wales Opera. She reached the final in the 2011 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition.

Saxophonist and composer **Tom Richards** (2004) continues to write for a variety of ensembles including the BBC Concert Orchestra and the Metropole Orchestra, as well as his on-going touring with Jamie Cullum.

Postgraduate student **Andri Björn Róbertsson** won second prize and the audience prize at the 2011 Maureen Lehane Vocal Awards, held at Wigmore Hall. The Accompanist Prize was awarded to **Timothy End** (2009).

Postgraduate jazz guitarist **Alex Roth** won the Dankworth Prize for Jazz Composition 2011. His piece was performed at Ronnie Scott's.

Jazz pianist **Gwilym Simcock**'s (2003) latest album Good Days at Schloss Elmau, which was released in January 2011, was nominated for the Mercury Prize.

Dennis Simons (1963) and **Penny Simons** (1964) both teach at Minot State University, where Dennis holds a professorship in Music and is director of the Minot Symphony Orchestra and Penny is an adjunct instructor in Music.

Violinist **Alexander Sitkovetsky** (2005) and pianist **Wu Qian** (2009) won first prize at the prestigious Trio de Trieste Competition. As part of the prize they will perform at Carnegie Hall in January 2012, and in a concert tour around Italy.

The debut album by Round Trip — saxophonist **Michael Chillingworth**, bassist **Tom Farmer**, drummer **Josh Morrison** and trumpeter **Richard Turner** (2006), who tragically died in August 2011 — was released in April on F-IRE Records. Richard pursued a busy freelance schedule and was in ever-growing demand as a performer and educator.

Current student **Alexandra Vaduva** won first prize at the Vienna International Piano Competition.

Philip Venables's (2005) numbers 76–80 : tristan und isolde was premiered by EXAUDI and Endymion at the Purcell Room. He also collaborated on the design and construction of a touch-sensitive dance-floor for the Kings Place Festival.

Pianist **Chris White** (2009) worked at the Munich Opera Festival as assistant to Ivor Bolton on Mozart's Mitridate. He will be taking up a permanent position as repetiteur at English National Opera from April 2012.

Jonathan Willcocks (Junior Academy Director 1990–2008) is continuing his freelance work as a composer and conductor. Two new CDs of his music have recently been released, and conducting work — often of his own music — has taken him around the world. He will be Musical Director of the National Federation of Women's Institutes for a four-year period up to their Centenary in 2015.

Undergraduate pianist **Chiyan Wong** won the 2011 Jaques Samuel Intercollegiate Piano Competition and was invited to give recitals at Wigmore Hall and Italy's Fazioli Auditorium.

Current postgraduate student **Reinis Zarins** was chosen as one of the pianists at the Luzern Festival and Academy, directed by Pierre Boulez, with the Ensemble Intercontemporain.

Thanks to you all: a word from Carol and Sarah, the Fundraising Team

Success in 2011, thanks to all our supporters
As we look back over 2011, it seems like yesterday that we were preparing for the Elton John/Ray Cooper concert at the Royal Opera House that took place in January to raise funds for a new organ in the Duke's Hall. So many of you came to our aid and bought tickets, enabling us to raise all the £1.2 million that we needed. We are so pleased to report this latest fundraising success, with many thanks to Elton, Ray and their amazing team, as well as our many other dedicated supporters.

The world-class organ builders Kuhn visited the Academy in November 2011 to agree designs, and the lengthy build is now under way. The organ will be installed over the summer of 2013. Keep an eye on our website for a first glimpse of the new instrument.

New theatre plans
As we write this, Sir Colin Davis, Jane Glover, John Copley and a superb team supporting Royal Academy Opera have just completed a four-night run of Berlioz's Béatrice et Bénédict. Our young singers have triumphed once again, and the production received outstanding reviews: 'In a piece teeming with delightful ensembles there is good singing all over the stage. Beg for a return; it's sold out', wrote Richard Morrison in The Times.

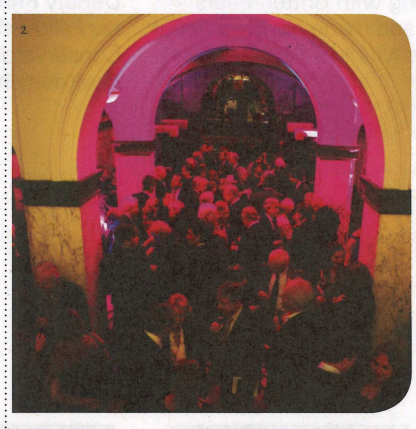
As we continue to improve and update our facilities, we are hatching plans for our next fundraising project — the refurbishment of our theatre. The Academy's theatre stages the Academy's opera and musical theatre productions, as well as a host of other performances every year. It welcomes conductors and performers at the peak of the profession, and witnesses Academy students in their daily training. Audiences are invited in to witness this unique relationship of master and student at work; the passing on of skills that transform Academy students into world-class professional musicians, following in the footsteps of our musical forefathers. It is this transformation that brings audiences from around the world to the Academy's door.

The Academy's theatre was built in 1976 and is in urgent need of a restructure and rebuild. A major refurbishment will ensure that the Academy stays true to its promise: to offer its students the best training, in the best facilities, from the best tutors. We are in the early stages of planning and hope to be able to update you over the next year on progress and a timeline for our future theatre plans.

Scholarships, Patronage, Legacies and the Endowment
As ever, raising funds for student scholarships lies at the heart of all our work. We face funding challenges head-on and continue to grow our family of supporters who are dedicated to helping young talent. Our thanks go to all the Patrons and scholarship supporters who have helped us this year. We must also thank all of you who have spoken to us about leaving a gift to the Academy in your Will.

This year was the final year of the Government's Matched Funding Scheme, which began in 2008. Through this scheme, we had the opportunity to receive a further £1 for every £3 that we raised. The targets for this were steep — but we are delighted to report that we have exceeded them, and as a result we have been able to increase our endowment. We aim to grow the endowment still further over the next five years, enabling us to reduce further the financial barriers that face so many of our student body.

1–6 In November the Academy celebrated a century on Marylebone Road, and 190 years since its founding in 1822.



Celebrating a century in Marylebone, and 190 years of the Academy

We rounded off the year with a celebration of our building's centenary on Marylebone Road, together with the Academy's 190th year since its founding in 1822. Our President, HRH The Duchess of Gloucester and the Principal, Professor Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, hosted this memorable event in which we enjoyed a wonderful programme conducted by Trevor Pinnock. Later in the evening, two violinists who study with György Pauk at the Academy took to the stage to perform a surprise item — Bruce Dukov's Happy Birthday Variations (in the style of Paganini and Wieniawski) — introduced by Her Royal Highness.

We leave you with a quotation from the Times:

'For 190 years the Royal Academy of Music has been the nursery, hothouse and generator for the British music profession — and from the start it was talent that mattered, not gender or social status... One hundred years ago the Academy moved to its custom-built premises in Marylebone Road. There it has become one of the great conservatoires: a place where the likes of Casals, Strauss, Stravinsky, and (more recently) Boulez and Barenboim dropped in to teach, and where the alumni ranges from Simon Rattle to Elton John. This history was celebrated on Monday, aptly, with music composed around the time that the Academy was founded, played by its current first team of instrumental students under Trevor Pinnock. And very spirited playing it was, too... with the teenage horn player Carys Evans displaying nerveless technique in front of an audience that included some of the most eminent musicians in the land... A surprise item later really showed the calibre of the 700-odd youngsters now passing through the Academy. From Latvia and Hungary respectively, the violinists Kristine Balanas and Julia Pusker produced eye-popping virtuosity.'

Whether you bought tickets, enjoyed our concerts, or helped us in so many other ways, we want to say thank you to you all. Next year promises to bring exceptional talent, and so watch out for our diary of events. We have over one hundred concerts per term which give music lovers unique opportunities to come and spot new, emerging talent.

Don't forget to follow us on Twitter or visit our website, www.ram.ac.uk

Wishing you a successful 2012 in all your musical endeavours.

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Sarah Harwood

Twenty Years: The Academy at Neresheim Abbey

The Academy's Head of Choral Conducting, Patrick Russill, reflects on a remarkable collaboration

September saw the 20th anniversary of a remarkable collaboration between the Academy and Neresheim Abbey in Southern Germany. Every year, under the leadership of David Titterington (Head of Organ) and myself, 24 students stay for a week in this famous baroque Benedictine monastery, adding music to the monks' daily liturgies and then giving a final concert at the end of the week.

This year baroque string players augmented the Academy Chamber Choir, organists and choral conductors. The repertoire in the daily services, which included organ, instrumental chamber and choral music, ranged from the 16th century to the present day. For the last three years, BBC Radio 3 has trekked out to Neresheim to record Choral Vespers performed by the Academy for its 'Choral Evensong' strand. In front of a local congregation of more than 400, this year's broadcast featured Italian and German repertoire largely from the 17th century. The BBC is eager to return again in 2012.

The late Nicholas Danby, the Academy's Head of Organ 1989–1995, originally had the idea of taking Academy students, organists and singers to one of his favourite concert and recording venues. Neresheim Abbey, founded in 1095, is a working monastery famous for the beauty of its baroque buildings and especially for its church, which was started in the 1750s and finally dedicated in 1792 to the designs of Germany's greatest late baroque architect, Baltasar Neumann. Its Holzhay organ of 1797, stunningly deployed around the windows, is a remarkable musical monument of the period.

So in 1991 a small choir and a group of organists, led by Nicholas and myself, arrived in Neresheim, a sleepy town in the rural depths of Swabia (between Munich and Stuttgart), dominated by the great abbey on the hill above. Encouraged by the Abbey's delightful organist, Father Hugo, whose puckish charm and anarchic improvisations have endeared him to students over the years, we started to explore how we could integrate our skills and traditions into the daily services. The reaction of the monks and of the locality in general was remarkable. By the end of the week, news had spread like wild-fire: the concert was a spectacular sell-out of over 1,000 people, and the Academy was immediately invited back by the impressive Abbot Norbert Stoffels.

The students themselves were bowled over (as successive years of students have continued to be) by the beauty of the landscape and the inspirational quality of the church's architecture and acoustic. The range of music culturally relevant to Neresheim and ideal in the church's luxuriantly expansive acoustic is enormous, ranging from Gregorian chant and the chant of Hildegard of Bingen, through the polyphony of Lassus, Handel and Aichinger, via the classical period of the Haydns (both Joseph and Michael) and Mozart — with whom the church is almost exactly contemporaneous — to Bruckner. The organ is ideal for the music of the late baroque and rococo, both German and French, as well as for early-19th-century repertoire. We soon also discovered that our own English organ and choral music sounded wonderful in the Abbey — as does much contemporary choral music — and that the monks loved it.

The collaboration went from strength to strength: the concert in 1992 was broadcast by SWR (Stuttgart); the collaboration was formally put on an annual footing in 1994; the Academy provided the music for the Abbey's 900th anniversary celebrations in 1995; and in 2001 a CD was made, including Masses by Lassus and Mozart. This featured one of the significant developments in the project — the occasional expansion of the group to include period instruments, especially cornetts and sackbuts and baroque strings. Extracts from the CD are still regularly heard on BBC Radio 3.

Over the years personalities have come and gone. Sadly Nicholas Danby died in 1997, to be succeeded by David Titterington. Coaches have included Susan Addison for early brass, Terence Charlston, Laurence Cummings and Adrian Butterfield. Former Neresheim students include established and rising singers such as Geraldine McGreevy, Andrew Foster-Williams, Gillian Keith, Lucy Crowe, Iestyn Davies, Ed Lyon and Marcus Farnsworth, as well as organists at St Davids, Ely, Newcastle and Rochester cathedrals, York Minster, The London Oratory and HM Chapels Royal at The Tower of London, St James's Palace and Hampton Court Palace.

But no foreign tour is just about the music. Other delights are fondly remembered and savoured: the clarity of the Neresheim light, the enveloping early morning mists, the wonderful walks in the woods (especially by moonlight), manic games of volleyball and table tennis, visits to local historic towns (most looking like sets for Die Meistersinger or Lohengrin), the monastery's beer cellar and the monks' own dark Braunbier brew — these have all become the stuff of Academy legend. And for this year's anniversary the town's mayor, together with Abbot Norbert, honoured the Academy group with a memorable reception at the town's railway museum followed by a special train-ride on the restored local line. The Principal and the Abbot were amiably ensconced together in the front seat — a splendid symbol of the enduring artistic and personal relationship between two historic institutions built up over the last two decades.

Bulletinterviews

Stuart Jackson

How did you start singing?
I began at the age of seven, and I sang at my local church and at school for many years. I took exams in recorder, cello and piano. Singing was always my favourite though, and I realised at about 16 that I wanted to focus exclusively on it. By this point my I was a tenor. I found that I loved exploring my adult voice, first with English song and comic song repertoire, and then with oratorio and light opera.

How did you decide to come to study at the Academy?
I took A-levels in the sciences, mathematics and music, and studied for a degree in Biological Sciences. Until the second year of university I was still undecided as to which path I wanted to continue, until I went on a summer singing course and realised that I adored performing and wanted to do it as a career. The year before university I did a gap year course at the Academy, which trained and secured my voice and was my first experience of professional vocal training and foreign language art song. When it came to auditioning for postgraduate studies I had a natural affinity for the Academy because of the time I had spent here. I also wanted to work with my teacher, Ryland Davies.

What have been the highlights of your time at the Academy?
The Academy has provided me with so many wonderful opportunities that it's so difficult to choose just a few. I would say that working with my teacher on improving my voice, and with my vocal coach Jonathan Papp and German coach Richard Stokes on developing my initially non-existent language skills, have been the most rewarding parts. I'm currently enjoying singing my first full opera role, as Benedict in the Academy production of Béatrice et Bénédict.

Have you had a chance to explore other repertoire as well as opera?
Having studied on the Vocal Studies course before Royal Academy Opera, I've learned sizeable amounts of both song and oratorio repertoire in my time at the Academy. I came here with no understanding of how to pronounce any foreign language, and recently achieved second place in the Wigmore Hall/Kohn Foundation Song Competition singing a mixture of German, French, English, Italian and Russian song repertoire. I find song and opera work dovetail very effectively, and I love performing both.

How do you see your career developing?
I would ideally like to perform a mixture of opera roles and song recitals. The Academy has helped me prepare for a varied career in singing, and I'm looking forward to developing as a singer on the professional stage.

Zoya Vyazovskaya

How did you start playing the flute?
I actually started playing the piano first. Then aged eleven I had a couple of flute lessons by chance, and was hooked! I studied piano and harp at Moscow Conservatoire — flute was my third instrument until I attended a summer school with William Bennett. To start with, he heard me play the piano, but soon he suggested that I come to the Academy to study as a first study flute player.

Why did you decide to come to the Academy?
The Academy has a fantastic reputation worldwide, and even before meeting William Bennett I knew that here I would have great performance opportunities and exciting orchestral projects. I love studying in the heart of London, having access to the Academy's amazing library with its extensive collections and the Academy's media lab and electronic studio, where I spend a lot of my time. On top of all this I am able to practise all these beautiful Academy pianos and harps! Above everything else are of course my Academy teachers who give me everything that I need to develop my full potential.

What have you enjoyed the most during your time at the Academy?
One of my most memorable experiences in my first year at the Academy was performing Mozart's Flute Concerto with an Academy orchestra directed by a student conductor, Francesco Pasqualetti. I've also enjoyed playing contemporary music at the Academy, particularly as a soloist in Elena Firsova's Flute Concerto and Berg's Chamber Concerto conducted by Heinz Holliger. My stints as first flute in Academy orchestras have also been very enjoyable; a Debussy and Ravel programme conducted by Martyn Brabbins particularly stands out in my memory.

What about chamber music groups here?
I love chamber music and play in several ensembles at the Academy, both as a flautist and as a pianist. Due to my interest in contemporary music, I also often perform and record new music created by the Academy's student composers.

What are you planning to do at the end of your course?
I am thinking about continuing at the Academy as a postgraduate. I would like to develop further as a soloist and an orchestral musician. In my future career I would like to be able to do a mixture of things, including solo engagements, orchestral work and teaching. I am also very passionate about recording, particularly some of the many excellent works which have never been recorded before.

How would you describe the Academy atmosphere?
It's very friendly and creative. What I like about the Academy is that you can always find your own space to work on self-improvement, while at the same time the creative energy of other musicians is all around you if you need it!

Museum & Collections

The Royal Academy of Music's Museum and Collections contribute to music's capacity to inspire, unite, console and stimulate through events, performance, displays and research using its eminent collections of instruments, art, photography, manuscripts and scores.

A selection of these collections is displayed in the Academy's Museum galleries, open to the public every weekday (11.30am–5.30pm) and on Saturdays (12.00 noon–4.00pm). In addition to small changing exhibitions, the Museum includes long-term displays of fine stringed and keyboard instruments. The Museum also provides ongoing public events for a wide audience, from academics, professional musicians, students, interested and knowledgeable amateurs, to young people and families. Admission to the Museum and to most events is free.

2011 was a year of growth and change for the Museum and Collections, building on the proud achievement of formal Accreditation last year from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA — now absorbed by Arts Council England). Following a management review, the Museum staff, Collections curators and custodians, and the digitisation office were formally merged in September into a single streamlined unit under a new Head of Collections, Angela Doane. Having reviewed its strategic priorities, the Museum looks forward to launching gallery redevelopment and programming enhancement in support of the Academy's mission to preserve and enrich international musical culture through the training and education of the most talented musicians to the highest standards.

Collections acquisitions, events and displays
Looking over the many activities of the past year, a mix of research events, family events, longer-term and temporary displays have highlighted the Academy's diverse collections.

These collections also continue to grow selectively, as the Academy acquired a number of interesting collection items over the year. A fine Italian viola by Mascoilli 1775 Milan was received by bequest. This instrument is a well-proportioned and rare example by the maker, who evidence suggests was a pupil of CA Landolphi; it is currently on loan to an Academy student, and an 'In Focus' feature is in preparation for The Strad magazine.

In October over 150 people gathered for an intercollegiate study day on the work of the great 18th-century maker Carlo Bergonzi. The event was organised by Instrument Curator David Rattray and Deputy Principal (Programmes and Research) Timothy Jones. Those attending came from all over Britain and Europe, including violin-making students from Newark and West Dean colleges. The event was initiated by Fondazioni Stradivari, working with the Academy, with speakers and panel members including John Dilworth, Carlo Chiesa and Chris Reuning. This event received coverage in the October issue of The Strad magazine and the BVMA newsletter.

To complement the Bergonzi seminar, a well-attended temporary exhibition of seven important Bergonzi instruments was displayed in the Strings Gallery. An eighteen-page handbook was provided which included instrument images, an introduction to the instruments and their makers, and a welcome from the Principal.

In July the Museum's Curator of Art and Iconography Janet Snowman hosted a session on behalf of the National Portrait Gallery's Subject Specialist Network series, 'Understanding British Portraiture'. Art historians and museum personnel from throughout the country spent the early part of the day with the theatre and music portraits at the Garrick Club, moving then to the Handel House Museum, and finally to the Academy's Duke's Hall.

2011 was a busy year for displays. Thanks to redecoration works carried out in the Academy's main building, a series of screenprints from the Foyle Menuhin Archive, made in 1970 by the eminent Welsh artist Ceri Richards (1903–71), has been framed for everyone to enjoy in the basement floor.

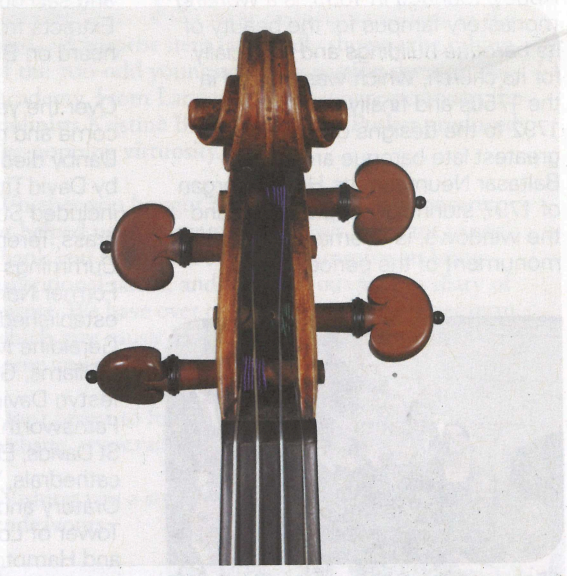
The Museum's Strings Gallery has displayed a number of fine instruments, such as the Stradivari viola 1696 Archinto (Case 1), Stradivari violin 1718 Maurin (Case 2), Stradivari violin 1709 Viotti (Case 3), and the Rugeri cello c1695 George IV (Case 4). In the larger main case are displayed five Amati violins, a Guarneri violin and viola, a Rugeri violin, a Stradivari violin and violins by Jacobs Cross and Cuthbert. These highlight the amazing depth and breadth of the Academy's stringed instrument collection.

The fourth-floor rooms in the main building were also redecorated and rehung over the summer. Sketches by Juliet Pannett, donated by Priscilla Naish, have greatly enhanced two of the main teaching rooms. Contemporary posters from the Granville Collection were framed and hung in the teaching room of Joanna MacGregor, Head of Piano Studies.

In early September the Academy once again took part in the Open House initiative. Two long tours of the Academy building complex and portraits were undertaken, with audience including architecture students and people with an interest in music. For this session, Janet Snowman successfully tried out a personal iPod tour relating to the portraits in the Duke's Hall, with brief fragments of music associated with each of the sitters.

Highlights of our 'Object in Focus' (formerly known as 'Object of the month') display this year included Joachim String Quartet concert programmes from the McCann Collection, a copy of a manuscript score of Peter Maxwell Davies's Sinfonia (1962), the first edition of the revised version of the full score of Ralph Vaughan Williams's A London Symphony, acquired by Sir Henry Wood in 1922, and many other previously unseen items from the Academy's collections.

In addition to making its collections visible through displays, the Museum also ensures virtual access through its website and through works with large partnership programmes. All of the Academy's oil, tempera and acrylic paintings will soon be available online through the Public Catalogue Foundation by visiting the BBC's Your Paintings website, providing an additional resource for those looking up works by particular artists or paintings with musical subjects.



Henry Wood project
Funded by the MLA Designation Development Award, the aim of the Henry Wood project has been to catalogue, conserve and make accessible Sir Henry Wood's collection of scores and manuscripts for future generations to enjoy. Over 3,000 records for the entire score collection have now been created. Anyone with an interest in Sir Henry Wood, who taught at the Academy for many years and began his career by studying at the Academy, can now explore the contents of his unique collection of scores and manuscripts through the online catalogues of the Museum and library.

An extensive digitisation programme has created high resolution digital versions of selected Henry Wood scores, as well as many others of special interest. Highlights include the original manuscript of Sir Henry's Fantasia on British Sea Songs, which has become part of the traditional Last Night of the Proms. The project will support the study of many aspects of British performance history, concert programming and repertoire, social and institutional history, and the art of conducting and musicianship in general; providing a wealth of resources to be used by students, researchers, academics and scholars.

To access the catalogue records please go to www.ram.ac.uk/library, and to view selected digitisation highlights please go to www.ram.ac.uk/apollo. For research access to the Henry Wood score collection, you can contact the Library: library@ram.ac.uk.

Now that cataloguing and digitisation is complete, the Academy will be focusing on making the collection of Sir Henry Wood accessible to a wide audience. The Museum has recently unveiled 'All Hands on Deck', a Key Stage 2 teaching resource for primary schools inspired by Sir Henry Wood's most famous piece, the Fantasia on British Sea Songs. This interactive digital resource, which is available for schools free of charge, explores a number of curriculum areas including history, art, citizenship and music, through video, images, activities and learning games. A part of the teaching resource is also available online on www.ram.ac.uk/museum/henrywoodresource.

The project culminated in a Henry Wood Gala concert in November, with performers including Academy students, musicians from the Academy's Junior and Primary Departments, Kuumba Youth Music, the LSO St Luke's Community Choir, HSBC Choir and London schools. The well-loved Fantasia on British Sea Songs was the focal point of the evening, which included a performance of the Fantasia itself, choral arrangements of the folksongs and arias that make up the piece, and new Fantasias on sea songs from around the world created by London schoolchildren.

Twenty-First Century Oboe

The Development of the Redgate-Howarth System Oboe

Christopher Redgate, Arts and Humanities Creative and Performance Research Fellow at the Academy, introduces the most substantial rethink of the oboe since the late 19th century

After two years' research, design and development, the Redgate-Howarth system oboe was launched at a research seminar at the Academy in November 2011. This is an oboe with a considerable amount of strategic key-work redesign that has been developed through collaboration between Howarth of London and myself.

The inspiration for this redesign is rooted in recent music for the oboe: music that has explored the very limits of the instrument, reimagining its sound world and demanding a great deal of the performers. While working with this music I started asking questions about the design of the key-work and formulated two aims for a potential redesign: the first, to meet the demands of these compositions; the second, to increase still further the instrument's potential. Through performing the music and talking with the composers I realised that a number of the works point beyond the current possibilities of the instrument. We needed to consider the far-reaching implications of some of these works, and to try to build our conclusions into the redesign process. This approach to instrument development — music inspired and performer driven — has a very strong historical precedent.

We made two significant decisions early on in the design process. First, the redesign is in response to specific musical demands, and so we made no attempt to start from scratch, but have developed an instrument that can be used by any oboist with very little relearning and, as most of the standard key-work is still on the instrument, any of the instrument's existing repertoire can be performed on it.

Secondly, we decided to make the instrument out of cocobolo wood rather than the more usual African Blackwood. Cocobolo weighs less than African Blackwood and, as we have added quite a few more keys to the instrument, we wanted to keep the weight to a minimum (the new instrument is almost exactly the same weight as a standard Howarth XL). In addition cocobolo responds exceptionally well to the demands of the contemporary repertoire. Having made these two decisions, a period of complex research began.

The research was focused upon the three areas highlighted in recent music: making the altissimo range more secure and if possible extending it; developing the microtonal potential of the instrument; and increasing its multiphonic possibilities. Work in each of these areas would help meet the demands of the music and also open up the potential of the instrument.

As regards key-work redesign, there is a great deal of crossover between these three areas. A number of sounds employed in these contemporary works require that the oboist uses two specific keys in unorthodox ways. Their use affects each of the areas mentioned. Consequently the repositioning of these keys became the starting point for our design work. In addition, for the altissimo range we also added a new 'flageolet' key and a small hole in one of the touch pieces to enable the high range to speak more easily. Multiphonic options were enhanced by these changes, but we knew from our research that two other changes would also yield significant results. The key for the left-hand first finger, when placed at different heights from the tone hole, enables a large number of multiphonics that are not readily available. We therefore devised a simple switch that enables the height to be altered quickly. In addition, the standard oboe has quite a number of links that make some areas of performance a little easier but severely limit the instrument's potential in other ways. We decided to remove these links.

Many composers today ask for quarter-tones, and the performer has to develop a range of very complex cross fingerings for these pitches. However the fingerings are so difficult that they render performance at any speed almost impossible. The repositioning of the keys and the de-linking have both helped, but in addition we have retuned the holes in some of the touch-pieces, tuning them to a quarter-tone sharp. The F-sharp key has been redesigned so that it can play a three-quarter sharp while maintaining all of the double trills associated with it. We have added one custom key — a 'B' a quarter-tone sharp. A few other changes have been made: a traditional side B-flat key has been added, as has a long C-sharp, and two little-used keys have been removed.

So, does the instrument do what we intended? And how is it to play? When I went down to the Howarth workshop in Worthing to collect the new instrument, it was waiting for me on the workbench. After a few moments playing, my first reaction was 'what a wonderful instrument!' The altissimo range is much more secure and accessible and I am now working to see if it can be developed further. The multiphonic potential has increased from about 900 sounds to 2,500 (I am still counting), the microtonal work is so much easier and has opened up the possibility of developing other microtonal scales such as a third- and sixth-tones.

As part of the research fellowship, I have been able to commission five new works. I am working in collaboration with each of these composers to further explore the potential of the instrument, and to have some repertoire that has been specifically written for the new oboe. Two of these works were performed at the launch event.

In addition to all of this key-work development, the new oboe boasts some impressive electronic technology which will enable the performer to control a laptop while still playing, making this truly a 21st-century instrument!

The research work and the commissions have been made possible through an Arts and Humanities Creative and Performance Research Fellowship.

www.21stcenturyoboe.com

Royal Academy of Music Alumni Network

by Ruth Byrchmore, Head of Alumni Development

Launched in 2010, the Royal Academy of Music's Alumni Network is a free professional support service and social network devoted to Academy alumni past and present, as well as students in their graduating year. Its central ethos is to keep the Academy relevant in the minds and lives of its alumni long after graduation. It offers a service that is discreet yet visible and easy to access, one that looks ahead whilst respecting and drawing from our heritage, a service that is non-judgemental, friendly, helpful and supportive. A service, ultimately, that is shaped and driven by its members, for life.

Following a happy Alumni Network annual lunch in June, the now annual Graduate Fair drew together leading industry experts in a jamboree of advice-giving to students on the cusp of graduation. The Principal led a team of recent alumni in a robust discussion about life post-graduation, a theme that was firmly on the minds of this year's exit-year students in early October, when the Professional Development Talks series set off with an inspiring talk by the Principal himself. This series is open to all students and alumni, and includes regulars such as Trevor Ford (Accounts) and Philip Sheppard (Portfolio Careers) as well as representatives from IMG, YCAT, Arts Council England, Cheltenham Festival, Deutsche Bank, Teach First and Music in Offices to name but some. Alumni Network members who don't catch the talks the first time round will soon be able to access highlights online.

On Sunday 16th October over 200 graduates from the 1960s arrived for the first Alumni Network reunion event. Loyal ambassadors of the Academy since they graduated, many guests had not met up for fifty years let alone stepped inside the building. Following an approach by Ann Collis (1965) and Dee Palmer (1965), a small team including Paul Patterson (1968), myself, Lucy Nixon, Rita Castle and Kate Garbutt devised an afternoon of reminiscence, memorabilia, refreshment and music. Anne delivered her welcome speech in the red sash and white gown worn as regulation by female orchestral students. The highly successful afternoon flew by and a follow-on event is already being planned — with Scratch Orchestra to boot. Graduates of the 1970s should watch this space for news of their reunion event planned for Spring 2013.

The Alumni Network Family Workshop events form an important part of our annual calendar and provide an opportunity to bring together musically sophisticated alumni and their families in pursuit of collaborative performance, improvisation and composition. Directed by leading animateur Jackie Walduck, the event on 29th October used Bartók's Romanian Folk Dances as a starting point and explored the spooky forests of Transylvania, transforming the original music into our very own Forest Dances. Alumni travelled from as far away as Dorset and Sussex and worked not only with Jackie, but also with our Academy Masters students and our Open Academy Fellow Caroline Sharp. A follow-on event with Jackie is planned for Saturday 18th February.

As I write, we are preparing for our magical Carols by Candlelight event, run in collaboration with St Marylebone Parish Church. This year's event, devised by Patrick Russill (Head of Choral Conducting), Jeremy Summerly (Sterndale Bennett Lecturer) and The Reverend Paul Thomas (Chaplain), will focus on a celebration of the musical majesty of Christmas with the entire Academy family, and will involve representatives from across our student, staff and alumni population — with ages of participants ranging from late-teens to 99.

2011 has been a full year for the Alumni Network, but the agenda for 2012 is even bigger. Apart from running our ever-expanding events programme, 2012 will see the launch of the Professional Development Mentoring Scheme for alumni and will see a big push to create international satellite operations. In November this year Deputy Principal Mark Racz and Head of Piano Studies Joanna MacGregor met Jackie Leung (2005), Chair of the Royal Academy of Music HK Alumni Association. Jackie is our first official representative and is running a thriving events and opportunities alumni initiative in Hong Kong. We hope to augment Jackie's work by establishing similar initiatives elsewhere.

Finally, we look forward in 2012 to the role the new Alumni Development committee will play in shaping lifelong belonging for alumni. We also look forward to the involvement of the Alumni Network's newly reconstituted RAM Club: Heritage committee, which will play a significant role in maintaining, celebrating and nurturing pride in the heritage of the Royal Academy of Music.

For more information on the Alumni Network, to book events and to register, please visit www.ram.ac.uk/alumni.

And who are we?

Ruth Byrchmore MMus, BMus, ARAM Head of Alumni Development, Chair Alumni Development Committee
Lucy Nixon BA, Dip Committees & Alumni Network Administrator
Rita Castle Alumni Network Administrator, R.A.M. Club: Heritage
Kate Garbutt BMus Alumni Network Assistant

2012 at the Academy

If you haven't visited the Academy's buildings on Marylebone Road recently, we hope that our forthcoming season's events will tempt you to drop by.

Highlights for Spring 2012 include:

— Orchestral concerts conducted by Tadaaki Otaka, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Sir Colin Davis and Sir Mark Elder
— Ensembles conducted by Franck Ollu (whose Frank Zappa disc with Academy students will be released soon)
— Visits from our celebrated guest conductor Trevor Pinnock and the newly-appointed Director of Brass Ensembles, Elgar Howarth
— Composer events ranging from Poul Ruders, Thea Musgrave and our Visiting Professor of Composition, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, to a rare visit to Britain by the great Sofia Gubaidulina
— Masterclasses with our distinguished Visiting Professoriate and special guests: Joseph Alessi, Sir Thomas Allen, Thierry Caens, Sarah Connolly, Helmut Deutsch, Steven Doane, James Ehnes, Leon Fleisher, Reinhold Friedrich, Angela Hewitt, Stephen Hough, Patrick Messina, Ann Murray, Steven Osborne, Rachel Podger, Philip Smith, Yevgeny Sudbin, Jörgen van Rijen, Maxim Vengerov, Radovan Vlatković and many others
— A masterclass and concert with the legendary Dave Douglas, recently-appointed International Jazz Artist in Residence
— Royal Academy Opera's production of Mozart's Die Zauberflöte, conducted by Jane Glover
— Barbirolli Lectures with Paul Badura-Skoda, Sir Neville Marriner and Sarah Walker
— Another concerto day with renowned pianist Dame Mitsuko Uchida, after the success of last year's workshop on Mozart's K.466
— Our acclaimed series of Bach Cantatas, in collaboration with the Kohn Foundation, enters its fourth year. Book soon to avoid disappointment!

We would be pleased to send you updates about Academy events by email or by post — please email publicity@ram.ac.uk or call us on 020 7873 7318 if you'd like to receive them.

You can also become a fan of the Academy on Facebook, or follow our news from day to day on Twitter: just follow the links from the Academy's own website at **www.ram.ac.uk**

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